



# PRESS RELEASE

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## FINANCING TO SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES IS HIGHLIGHTED

**SAN SALVADOR**– The U.S. Embassy, through the USAID Financial Services Program for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), held today a seminar entitled “Free Trade Agreement, Small and Medium Enterprises and the Financial Sector: Interlocking Challenges.”

The objective of the seminar is to increase awareness of the importance of supporting SMEs in light of free trade agreements, improving access to credit and alleviating its obstacles.

“Potential for SMEs to be part of the export productive chain increases more and more especially now that we have the Central America-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR),” said U.S. Ambassador H. Douglas Barclay during the seminar inauguration ceremony, adding that new opportunities and new challenges for enterprises are arising.

Seminar topics include: “The importance of SMEs to economic development in the Free Trade Agreements era in Latin America,” presented by Chilean expert Enrique Roman; “Opportunities and needs of Salvadoran SMEs in light of CAFTA-DR;” “The role of guarantee funds in the expansion of SME credit;” and “Perspective of the Superintendent of Financial System (SFS) on SME risk management.”

Seminar participants include representatives of Salvadoran banks, financial institutions focused on SME business, the SFS, projects and associations supporting SMEs, non-governmental organizations, as well as SME managers and owners. The activity was inaugurated by Ambassador H. Douglas Barclay; the Director of USAID Economic Growth Office, Lawrence Rubey; and the Executive Director of the Salvadoran Bank Association, Carlos Caceres.

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